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THE PROGRESS MADE IN TEACHING DEAF CHILDREN TO READ LIPS AND TALK, IN THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA.¹

BY ALEXANDER GRAHAM BELL.

THE total number of teachers of the deaf employed in the United States in 1890 was 641, and in 1891, 686. This is an increase of 45. When we come to analyze the details we find that this is an increase exclusively of articulation teachers. This is shown by the following facts. In 1890, there were 213 articulation teachers employed, whereas, in 1891, there were 260,—an increase of 47 articulation teachers. The first statistics upon this subject were collected by the Annals in 1886. In that year we find articulation teachers constituted 32.8 per cent of the hearing teachers in our schools for the deaf. In 1887 they constituted 40.5 per cent; in 1888, 44 per cent; in 1889, 45.7 per cent; in 1890, 45.2 per cent; in 1891, the latest returns, 50 per cent. Indeed, they constituted one more than 50 per cent. There were 260 articulation teachers to 259 hearing teachers who were not engaged in articulation work.

In regard to the proportion of deaf pupils taught speech, the increase during the past year has been very marked. In 1890, there were 3,682 deaf children in the United States taught speech; in 1891, 4,245, an increase of 563. In 1890, 41.3 per cent of our pupils were taught speech; in 1891, 46 per cent. I am sure that this increase is due very greatly to the stimulus of the first summer meeting of the American Association to Promote the Teaching of Speech to the Deaf.

Of course, the statistics in the Annals include the whole of our pupils, old as well as young, and it has occurred to me, therefore, that they may not give us a true indication of the extent to which the California resolution is being carried out in the country at large; and that a better indication would be obtained by statistics concerning younger pupils alone. I therefore sent out a circular letter of inquiry to

¹ Address delivered at the conference of the superintendents and principals of the schools for the deaf of North America, held at Colorado Springs, Aug. 8-11.

the superintendents and principals of American schools for the deaf, requesting:—

1. The total number of new pupils admitted during the school year just closed.

2. The number of new pupils taught speech; and

3. The number of these taught by speech.

Replies have been received from schools containing 7,987 pupils, or 80 per cent of the whole number under instruction in the United States and Canada.

The following table shows the results of the inquiry:—

Speech-Teaching in American Schools for the Deaf, 1891.

Schools for the Deaf.	Number of Pupils in Year 1891 [Annals of January, 1891].			New Pupils Admitted in School Year Ending June, 1892 [Replies to Circular of A. G. Bell].				
	Total pupils.	Total taught speech.	Percentage taught speech.	Total new pupils.	Total taught speech.	Total taught by speech.	Percentage.	
							Taught speech.	Taught by speech.
United States.	A...	5,614	2,960	53	836	580	363	43
	B...	1,619	759	47	266	189		71
	C...	1,999	536	27				
Total.....	9,232	4,255	46	1,102	769		70	
Canada.	A..	445	92	21	59	20	5	8
	B..	309	132	43	63	41		65
	C..	39	5	13				
Total.....	793	229	29	122	61		50	

A. Complete returns were received from these schools.

B. The returns received from these schools did not state definitely the number of new pupils taught by speech. The Canadian schools marked *B* refer to the two Roman Catholic schools in Montreal. They return 126 pupils, or 41 per cent of the whole, as taught by speech; but do not state how many of the new pupils were so taught.

C. These schools did not reply to the circular letter of inquiry.

It is encouraging to note that while 46 per cent of the whole number in our schools last year were taught articulation, 70 per cent of the younger pupils were afforded an opportunity of learning to speak. The statistics published in the Annals are somewhat defective because, while they give us the total number of pupils taught speech, they do not give us the number taught by speech; so that we have no statistics by which we can measure the progress of the oral method of teaching in America.

Professor Joseph C. Gordon of the National Deaf-Mute College, in some editorial remarks prefacing a volume entitled "The Education of the Deaf," about to be issued by the Volta Bureau, says: "The returns of pupils taught by speech are incomplete. The number reported for 1891 is 963, or 10.4 per cent of the school population." The above table indicates that the percentage, in the case of the younger pupils, must be very much larger. Out of 836 new pupils admitted during the past school year, 336, or 43 per cent, were taught by speech.

This percentage, however, is probably excessive, because the table shows that those schools which have done the most